



## *A Creed for the Park Service 1918*

Back in Washington, while Mather promoted the Redwoods, I launched into a project I had been thinking about for many months. I had been keeping a notebook with ideas, plans, statistics, and data taken in the field. They weren't all mine by a long shot, but they were all worthwhile and had given me much food for thought. Words and ideas of the famous and the unknown from Catlin to McFarland, Olmsted, and Colby, from men and women I'd talked to out in the parks, names beyond recall if I ever knew them. It was a hodgepodge of information if taken alone. But always in the back of my lawyer's mind, I wanted to organize it, codify it so to speak. Now that I had a little more time, I fell to the task of formulating a creed, a framework of ideological guidelines to which the National Park Service could aspire and grow into the future as time and conditions might change. Some years later a secretary of the interior called it the Magna Carta of the national parks. I don't know about that, but at the time I needed to rough out my thoughts and, I hoped, those of Stephen Mather. When I finished this draft, I took it to Secretary Lane to get his reaction.

As usual, he listened without interruption and then said: "Albright, that's a great idea. Put it down in full and let me see it on Monday. You know I'll be away for a week or so, so I'd like to mull it over during that time." I gulped at the thought of writing the whole thing up in three days, but I assured him I'd do my best.

Telling Isabelle Story not to disturb me unless the building was on fire, I closed the door to my office and set to work. I never was very good at dictation, so I had to write it out by myself on my little typewriter. I wrote and wrote and wrote. Whole sections would be finished and then I would think of something to add or change, so I'd start over again.

On Sunday I brought the work home, finished it to the best of my ability, then had Grace check it over for phrasing, spelling, and punctuation. Don't forget her grades were better than mine at Berkeley. On Sunday afternoon I took it over to Bob Yard's and asked for his comments and suggestions. He toned up some sentences and polished an idea here and there, but decided I had really covered the ground, offered no amendments, complimented me on the job, and stated that he was sure Mr. Mather would be happy with it. Aside from the many contributions made by thoughts and words from my notebook, Grace and Bob Yard were the only people who added to or subtracted from the finished product.

On Monday morning Isabelle Story typed it up in readable form, and I presented it to Secretary Lane. Instead of taking it with him when he went away, he read it immediately. In fact, he read it several times while I anxiously awaited his reaction. Then he smiled and nodded and, with no changes, approved it and said, "Good job, Albright. We'll use it."

Then I told him I had been giving a lot of thought to the form in which the "creed" should be released and offered the suggestion that it be as a directive from himself to Stephen Mather. It would carry more weight coming from the secretary of the interior, and it would promote and enhance the name of Director Mather, a phantom figure now due to his extended absence. In addition, I secretly felt that it didn't hurt to give Lane a little extra pat on the back. He gladly accepted credit for it and had it printed in the 1918 annual report of the National Park Service: *'Statement of National Park Policy, May 13, 1918, from Franklin K. Lane to Mr. Stephen T. Mather.*

I had tried to write it in Mather's spirit—his ideas, what he would wish to say—but I didn't have time to show it to him until after Lane had approved it. When Mather did get it, he never criticized a word, just congratulated me on the effort.

Admittedly, I was relieved by Mather's acceptance of the manner in which the directive was addressed. I let it stand at that, never wishing to inject the truth. Then in 1925, unknown to all except Secretary of the Interior Hubert Work and Mather, I was asked to revise the creed. This also was presented as a directive, this time from Work to Mather.

There always remained argument and doubt among National Park Service historians and writers about who really wrote it. Franklin K. Lane? Stephen Mather? Finally Lon Garrison, superintendent of Yellowstone, stated openly that I had written it. He had pieced together the fact that Lane wasn't really able to have put together something like that and in 1918 Mather was not functioning. Garrison boxed me in at a Park Service conference of senior officials in Philadelphia in 1964 and made me tell this story. Although I had never cared for recognition of the work, I have privately taken great pride in promoting these standards for which our service has stood ever since.

There is no need to go into all of the sections of the creed. The underlying theme was to clarify and elaborate the ideas and goals set for the National Park Service in the brief organic act of August 1916. My ideas were meant to outline the future management of the parks. I also tried to delineate more closely the paradox of leaving the parks unimpaired and yet allowing their use and enjoyment as a "pleasuring ground" for the people.

In a speech I gave to a meeting of the General Federation of Women's Club around this time, I said: "There are four general functions fulfilled by the national parks: the development of physical health and the desire for outdoor life on the part of the citizens; the development of a broader mental horizon and the education of the people in the ways and habits of wild animals, birds, and natural history; the development of a national patriotism; the diversion of the tourist travel from foreign countries and the retaining of the money spent by American tourists abroad in this country."

Others may differ over the highlights of my directive, but I felt the following were very important:

1. The national parks must be maintained in absolutely unimpaired form, and every activity of the service is subordinate to the duties imposed upon it faithfully to preserve the parks for posterity in essentially their natural state.
2. The parks should be set aside for use, observation, health, and pleasure of the people.
3. The national interest must dictate all decisions affecting public or private enterprise in the parks.
4. It is necessary to restrict leasing of lands. In national parks summer homes and other private holdings should be eliminated. No

trees should be cut except for vistas, infestations, or hazards. Harmonize trails, roads, buildings, and other improvements with the landscape.

5. All concessioners should be regulated as to rates, have no competition, and yield revenue to the federal government. All types of accommodations should be provided either by the concessioner or by the Park Service, from free campsites with water and sanitation to luxury hotels.

6. Sports should be encouraged (except for hunting), but not to interfere with the enjoyment by other visitors or in any way to harm the natural environment. Educational use of parks, museums, and other attractions should be promoted.

7. The National Park System should not be lowered in standards, dignity, and prestige by the inclusion of areas that express in less than the highest terms the particular class or kind of exhibit they represent. Existing parks should be improved by the addition of adjacent areas that would complete their scenic or other purposes.

At the same time I was writing the "creed," I gave a great deal of thought to the future. Although I had promised Mr. Mather I would stay on to organize and operate the National Park Service until he could return, I was rapidly losing faith in the possibility that he would ever again pick up the reins of his office. He had stayed away from Washington for months, now stretching into years. Although appearing to be back to complete physical health, he still felt shaky about his mental and nervous condition. He seemed afraid to undertake responsibility for assuming the operation of the service, although he was mildly involved in routine concession problems, attempts to expand the boundaries of Yellowstone and Sequoia, and the publicity work that Yard was handling so well. We tried to keep him abreast of national park affairs, but at Weisenburg's insistence still siphoned off anything that might worry or upset him. The balance continued to be delicate.

Mather and I wrote to each other two or three times a week. My correspondence, along with official bureau papers, was mainly anecdotal, for he loved "inside" news. His warm, upbeat letters were full of his social activities and plans to come to Washington, which never materialized. Plans for Washington changed to plans for a long tour of the West that would take up most of the spring, summer, and perhaps September. On April 1, 1918, he wrote: "Oh, Horace, I just can't wait to get back where

there are snow-clad mountains, winds fresh with scent of pines, lakes so calm you can see your face in them. And this is no April Fool's joke! I'm mapping out my trail west now and will let you know details shortly." Not too long after that he sent me an itinerary that included a visit to the northwestern parks, an extended trip in the Sierra, and then another long vacation at Charlie Thompson's Lake Tahoe home.

By May Mather's letters were coming from Yosemite. They were good news to me, for he was picking up threads of work, and it didn't seem to upset him. I had suggested to him that he settle on promotion and pay standards for Yosemite that could then be applied throughout the system. He and Dusty Lewis did a fine job on that. Then on May 31 he was to have a meeting in San Francisco with Will Colby and food administrator Ralph Merritt concerning cattle grazing. I was confident that his deft rapport in this sticky situation would prove valuable.

During all this time Mather never once mentioned stepping into the directorship, now or in the future. And he said nothing about my future either. My morale was hitting bottom with the long-range problems as well as the lesser but constant annoying situations. How often I wished I had just one man near me with whom I could discuss the park problems, just one more person to share in the decisions.

Now came "the rite of spring," the agony of appropriations. Although Joseph Swager Sherley, the honorable representative from Kentucky, was a lofty step above the miserable Fitzgerald, he was not known to be an easy touch when it came to allotting money. Furthermore, I had no personal knowledge of the man, so I was doubly nervous at testifying before him.

Although it was a tough session, the Park Service came out bruised but not beaten considering wartime and the scarcity of funds for civilian use. The outlook for continuance of the war into or through the next fiscal year weighed heavily against our financial needs. For the entire park system, only \$754,195 was made available. There wasn't a cent for new roads and only a small amount for improving the existing El Portal road in Yosemite.

For fire fighting, not a penny was allocated. We were facing a brutally dry summer and had to end up using our reserve maintenance funds when disastrous fires erupted in Yellowstone and Glacier. From that time on, I fought for a separate fund to fight fires whenever they broke out in any park.

Throughout the federal government, the policy on fire was to fight it immediately and vigorously, and this was costly, for fire was a common occurrence in the West. For the national forests, the reason was that valuable commercial timber could be burned. For the national parks, the idea was the beauty of the landscape and the wildlife in them should be protected and left "unimpaired."

It was suggested that money could be saved by just letting the fires burn themselves out as the Indians had done. But Indians had been terrified of great fires and did everything in their power to keep from starting them. Only their angry gods did that. The more civilization crept across the land, the more fires were caused by man—especially in national parks with pack trains, campgrounds, and incidentals like machinery and cigars.

In the appropriations there also was no raise in pay for personnel. Despite my pleas for some recognition for the national monuments, not a cent more was set aside for "the orphans." This was terribly disturbing to me. I was fearful that many of them, particularly the Southwest historic ones, would further disintegrate, perhaps beyond hope of restoration, unless we could get even minor appropriations.

The saving grace was that authority was granted to various organizations and universities for scientific work in many monuments. Among those involved were Dr. Edgar Hewett of the School of American Research excavating the ruins of Gran Quivira, Dr. Clark Wissler of the American Museum of Natural History doing archaeological work at Chaco Canyon, and my old friend Neil Judd of the National Museum of the Smithsonian, who was hard at work restoring Betatakin cliff dwelling at Navajo National Monument.

During the war, Judd had been locked into what he called "a lifetime at an aviation concentration camp" in Oklahoma. During 1918 we exchanged ideas about my desire to create an archaeological division of the Park Service, both for scientific research and for restoration of ancient sites. I wanted Neil to be the chief of it, and he was as enthusiastic over the plan as I was.

Of course, it was the same old story of no money to start anything new. After the war ended, I lent what little weight I had to get him back into the Smithsonian, where he had been working when I first knew him in Washington. Even though our plans couldn't be carried out, in the years ahead he was always a great help to me and gave me an endless flow

of free knowledge and advice as well as contributing invaluable work in our western archaeological sites.

Because of the tight fiscal situation, I was particularly upset about the newly created national parks. Lassen received no appropriation, no road or trail improvement, and was still being administered by the Forest Service, which was allowing grazing.

Of course, Lassen wasn't the only area to see zero new appropriations. Hawaii and Mount McKinley suffered that fate along with the Grand Canyon, which was included in the appropriations for the fiscal year 1918-19.

Probably one of the hardest things on the service was the Appropriations Committee's refusal to negate a 1917 ruling that admission fees earned in the parks could not be used in them. Revenues of the national parks were to continue to revert to the United States Treasury. We saw little of them after that.

*One lovely Sunday in May, Grace and I adjourned to Rock Creek for a picnic. She suddenly blurted out, "Horace, I have no idea how to say this except we're going to have a baby." I was bowled over but thoroughly delighted. We eagerly began to make plans for the newcomer, whose birth was expected around February 1, 1919.*

The glow lasted for me only until that night, when Grace slept peacefully and I couldn't sleep a wink. The euphoria had died down and was replaced with apprehension, doubts, and worries. I had to have a known future and a better-paying job. I was deeply concerned with the knowledge that Mather might never return to Washington, that I was stuck in this uncertain position of acting director, that I had made no real plans for my future as an attorney in San Francisco, that I not only had my beloved wife, but soon there would be another human being to care for. The whole thing overwhelmed me.

The responsibility for charting my own family's course was crushing enough, but to feel that whatever I did would have an influence on the course of the National Park Service now and into the future made it worse. I sat out on our tiny balcony half the night, chewing on my knuckles (a bad habit) and rolling all the alternatives around in my mind.

Unfortunately, in that day and age, it was supposed to be the sole responsibility of the male to decide family and career questions. Later I found that talking everything over with my beautiful and very intelligent wife was the real solution. Temporarily I just couldn't face up to a deci-

sion. I'd have to get the appropriations set up for the new fiscal year and then use my summer for an inspection trip of the parks, straightening out the worst problems there.

Sometimes I felt like getting down on my knees and praying that Stephen Mather would get well enough to pick up the reins of his office before our baby was born. I just had to leave the Park Service by that time. I vowed I had to.

I tried to maintain what little confidence I had that Mather might still return in 1918. I formulated plans to cover as much ground as possible in my summer inspection trip, to iron out field problems so the service would be in good shape should he be able to take over.

In the meantime, on May 24, Mather had set off for the West with his business associate in Chicago, Oliver Mitchell. He wrote that he would stay in Yosemite for a few days before going to visit Thorkildsen in Los Angeles. He sent no itinerary, no schedule, just a brief, "I will wire you from time to time, keeping you posted on my movements." There was nothing left for me to do in Washington with the adjournment of Congress and the operation of the government going into hibernation for the next few steamy months.

*The frightening outbreak of the so-called Spanish Flu caused me to accelerate my plans for leaving Washington. Mortality was exceedingly high, especially for pregnant women. I had to get Grace to the West Coast, which was reported to be somewhat safer. On July 1, we boarded a train for Denver, where we separated. She went along to her parents' home in Berkeley while I began my travels.*

Before I was diverted into major problems in the large national parks during that summer of 1918, I decided to further my knowledge of the national monuments. I had been deeply interested in these forsaken bits of our Park Service. Mather considered them beyond the pale, sort of nuisances for which we were legally responsible. He felt most were of poor scenic value, and he had little interest in historical areas. Furthermore, most were far from railroads or other means for tourists to visit them. That meant if there was no visitation, there would be no congressional appropriations.

Short acquaintance with Mukuntuweap (Zion), Colorado, and a few other monuments had whetted my interest in them. I had read everything I could lay my hands on about them, and now I decided to take an in-depth look to see how they could be brought up to the standards set for the national parks. I knew full well that it would be a tough job to get

any money from Congress. But if I presented solid knowledge, with facts and figures coupled with enthusiasm and plans to lure tourists to the monuments—well, anything was possible.

After parting with Grace in Denver, I headed to the Southwest to meet Frank Pinkley, custodian of the Casa Grande Ruins. I had him join me at Grand Canyon for an inspection of the Southwest monuments.

Frank Pinkley was indeed a remarkable human being. He had come to Arizona to regain his health after contracting tuberculosis. Pitching a tent near the Hohokam ruins of Casa Grande, which had been set aside for preservation by President Benjamin Harrison in 1889, Pinkley made these his own. From 1901 until his death in 1940, he gave them, and many other sites in the Park Service, his devoted, loving care.

When Pinkley and I were about to leave the Grand Canyon, he wanted to use his car on our trip. I was shocked into silence when I saw this thing he called a car, which looked like it couldn't get out of El Tovar even rolling downhill. It was the most rattletrap auto I'd ever seen. It looked like a decrepit boiler with wheels, with rickety posts to hold the top on. He called it "The Baby." I knew he had constructed a house at Casa Grande out of junk he had found or had been donated, so I asked, "Had some leftovers from the home-building, huh?" He laughed at that, and I in turn admired him more every minute, for he had a great sense of humor.

Ford Harvey stepped in at this point and insisted that we borrow one of his nice touring cars. Mrs. Pinkley could take the family car home. Pinkley proclaimed that I had to drive because he wouldn't know how to handle anything that splendid.

Of the Interior Department's twenty-four national monuments in 1918, thirteen (not counting the potential Zion Park) were in the southwest corner of America. Who had ever heard of Montezuma Castle, Capulin Mountain, Natural Bridges, Rainbow Bridge, and most of the others? Or what they were or where they were? I had to admit that I was vague on a few until Pinkley shoved a map in front of me and lectured me on each, even the ones he'd never seen. But, by golly, he'd read everything available and knew them as though he spent his life in them.

*It was a whirlwind trip, but we covered an enormous amount of territory. From Grand Canyon we headed south through Prescott to Phoenix. We planned to visit Montezuma Castle National Monument, an ancient five-story Indian cliff dwelling, but the road to it was obliterated by recent summer storms. We stopped overnight in the desert capital of Phoenix. It was one of the most fearsome nights*

*I ever spent, under a fiery hot tin roof that radiated the previous day's 120 degree heat. Pinkley and I gave up around 5:00 A.M. and headed for his Casa Grande.*

When we arrived at Pinkley's home at Casa Grande, I was astounded. How he managed to exist in this home with a wife and children, I could never imagine. His house couldn't qualify as anything better than a shack. He had constructed it himself with remnants of materials he had scrounged up. I was shocked to learn that this was typical of the manner in which our national park people were existing in many places—almost like wilderness slums, living no better than animals. Fortunately, I had brought my camera along this summer to record my inspections, so that I could demonstrate at future congressional hearings exactly what the conditions in our parks were. I certainly snapped plenty at Casa Grande.

Our dinner was cooked on an outdoor fire and eaten at a table made of two rough planks resting on wooden boxes. Our seats were benches of the same. Pinkley anxiously awaited my last bite. Then he grabbed a flashlight and said, "Mr. Albright, how about a tour of my castle?" By the beam of his torch, we toured Casa Grande.

Of course, there really was not much left of the Hohokam enclave. But you would think you were gazing on one of the Seven Wonders of the World to see the affection and pride Pinkley had in his moldering ruins. It was beyond belief. He pointed out every spot that had been restored, every plan he had to complete his dream. To him it appeared a true *casa grande*, a magnificent house of the noble Hohokam rising toward the sun, not a melting mound of clay as we saw it.

After we had spent an hour or so looking over his domain and were slumped by the fire outside his home, we got to talking about long-range plans. I questioned him very carefully, not just concerning Casa Grande, but about other national monuments. What could be done about them? How could we arouse interest enough to get money for them? Where could we find other competent people like himself who had the love and devotion for these treasures being saved through the Park Service? Although he had given a great deal of thought to the problem, he honestly admitted that he really didn't have any answers. I remember one thing he said though: "At the rate attention has been given to our monuments, there'll be no need to remember them. Before long they will have been washed away or crumbled away by sun and rain or hoisted away by tourists and merchants."

His thoughts and spirit, his enthusiasm and practical knowledge, so impressed me that I spontaneously threw out the idea: "Pinkley, what

would you think about taking on the superintendency of Grand Canyon when we get it—probably next year?" He didn't jump for joy as I expected. He didn't even act like he'd heard me for a few minutes. Then he replied: "I'm deeply grateful that you'd even think of me for the position. I've had so little experience in the National Park Service. But I'd just like to say that I'm at home with my little ruins. And if you feel I could help you, let me work on this one and perhaps other national monuments. They all need attention and help so badly."

As it turned out, when Grand Canyon did become a national park the following year, Pinkley's name was brought up to fill the superintendency slot, and I spoke up against it. I remembered this intimate conversation of a year ago. Not that I didn't think he could handle the position magnificently. I knew his wishes and that he was the only one available who could oversee the southwestern monuments with expertise and devotion.

Continuing our discussion well into the night, I listened intently to his ideas and was more impressed by the minute. I promised him that evening that one thing I would do was get Casa Grande out of the limbo it was in. Although under the Interior Department, it was neither fish nor fowl. It had been created in 1889 as Casa Grande Ruin Reservation. I immediately wrote Secretary Lane, extolling Pinkley's work and the need to publicize the monuments, and requested that he get Casa Grande's status formalized. On August 3, 1918, it was legally made a national monument by executive order. I wasn't with "Pink" at that time, but I know it had to be one of his happiest days.

*Pinkley and I bounced around the desert roads of southern Arizona and gave special attention to Tonto and Tumacacori National Monuments. I kept asking myself, why should a national monument like Tonto be in the Forest Service, Department of Agriculture, instead of the National Park Service, Department of the Interior, when it was so like Casa Grande, Montezuma Castle, and others? The sad state of the old Spanish mission of Tumacacori prompted me to appoint Pinkley as custodian of this monument as well as his Casa Grande.*

*Our friendship, my confidence in Pinkley, and his brilliant and intelligent work eventually culminated in his appointment as superintendent of Southwestern Parks, which included fourteen units. "Boss" Pinkley proved to be one of the giants of the National Park Service.*